

LEAF Lesson Plan



TIMBER PENDANT

Suitable for
AGES 9 - 16

LEARNING
ABOUT
FORESTS

Description	Forest or School Based Workshop where students make a timber pendant from native Irish wood
Aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To create wooden pendantsTo learn about the tree species, where the wood comes from, its habitat and role within the wider environment.
Needed on the day	“Biscuits” of timber before arriving to forest. The most appropriate timber is hazel. (see details below) Boring/drilling tool Cotton string Scissors to cut string
Where	Forest (but also works in classroom setting)
Age group	9-16

Lesson outcome

- Each student will leave with a timber pendant
- Will know the tree species it is made from
- Will understand more about that tree's particular features as well as more general information about native Irish trees

Timescale and outline of Activities:

Activity takes approximately 30 minutes.

Activity works best with groups of 8-10 students. If the group is larger split them up and allow the one group to explore/build camps within eyeshot of the group making the pendants. Swap over once initial group have completed the activity.

Step by step

Distribute pieces of wood. Take this time to explain what species it is, where it is common, what type of soil it prefers, the biodiversity it supports and its role in Irish history and mythology (species information below).

- Hand out tools to make hole in timber.
- Place timber against a hard surface.
- Push tool firmly into centre of wood.
- Twist clockwise until it comes through to other side.
- Reinforce these points.

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Hand out strings (80cm long approx.). Ask students to double strings over and put a knot at the top where the two ends meet. This will create a loop. This loop is then inserted into the hole in the wood and doubled back around itself (see diagram). Now the pendants are made. If the students are at school they can decorate the piece of wood or write the name of the tree on it.

Ask the students to tell their families what they learned (biodiversity, native Irish tree, carbon sequestration).

Information on some suitable tree varieties

Willow - Supports huge numbers of insects and has a bird named for its preference to willows (willow warbler). Loves wet areas and can tolerate semi acid soils. Traditionally used for weaving. Source of salicylic acid (aspirin).

Hazel - Loves alkaline soils and hence found in the Burren. Forms low dense canopies. Grows in long straight rods which used to be very important for house building (wattle and daub). Nuts loved by squirrels and children alike (nut spread). A noble tree under Brehon Law.

Oak Likes deep fertile soils. Produces acorns as seeds. Hosts huge number of insects, mammals and birdlife. Lives up to one thousand years old. Sessile oak is Ireland's national tree. Climax species. Will be the last species in succession.

Timber biscuits prep

Hazel is the most user-friendly timber. One branch around 1 metre long will provide 50+ pieces.

Cut with a chapsaw. Could be done with regular saw but would be very slow. If you cannot do it yourself find someone in your area who could do this for you in one large batch. Making one hundred pieces takes roughly 15-20 minutes with a chapsaw.

